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THE CLASS OF 1990—Following the annual rite of passage known as Match Day, members of the Class of '90 and BUSM faculty celebrate at the end of another yearly event—the class picture. For Match Day results, see p. 3. (photo by Jeffrey Dunn)

Study shows teens engage in risky behaviors despite knowledge of AIDS

Although the majority of Massachusetts adolescents know about the risks of AIDS, most of them report never using condoms or only using them sporadically, according to a BUSM study, "Beliefs about AIDS, Use of Alcohol and Drugs, and Unprotected Sex among Massachusetts Adolescents." The study, published in the March issue of the *American Journal of Public Health*, also showed that adolescents are even less likely to use condoms after alcohol or drug use.

Researchers from SPH conducted a phone survey of 1,773 Massachusetts adolescents aged 16 to 19. The researchers asked questions to determine the teens' ages, gender, level of education, amount of sexual activity and number of partners, knowledge and beliefs about HIV transmission and condom use, changes in behavior in response to the AIDS epidemic, and alcohol and drug use.

Among sexually active teens (61 percent of those interviewed), 31 percent reported always using condoms, 32 percent reported sometimes using condoms, and 37 percent reported never using condoms. Sixteen-year-olds were more likely than 19-year-olds to use condoms, and whites were more likely than non-whites to use condoms.

The researchers, Ralph Hingson, Sc.D., and Lee Strunin, Ph.D., both members of the Section of Social and Behavioral Sciences at SPH, found that because most adolescents know how HIV is transmitted, knowledge was not as important a predictor of condom use as other beliefs about AIDS and con-

doms. Adolescents were more likely to use condoms if they were concerned about acquiring AIDS, believed that condoms are effective in preventing HIV infection and if they had discussed AIDS with their physicians. Adolescents were less likely to use condoms if they believed that condoms reduce pleasure, are embarrassing to use or if they did not routinely carry them. Adolescents reported using condoms less often after drinking alcohol (16 percent) or using drugs (25 percent), and those who used condoms less frequently after alcohol or drug use also reported more sexual partners.

"The study showed that although we have done a good job educating adolescents about how AIDS is transmitted and how adolescents can protect themselves, many of them are still engaging in risky behaviors," said Hingson. "Because teens are more likely to have unprotected sex after drinking and drug use, counseling and education about AIDS should also include discussion about alcohol and drug use."

New approach to treating Alzheimer's disease under study at BUSM and UH

Researchers at BUSM and the University Hospital are participating in a nationwide, multicenter clinical trial of nimodipine, a drug that may not only slow the progression of Alzheimer's disease, but also represents a new approach to the treatment of this disease.

Alzheimer's disease—a degenerative, neurological disorder—affects an estimated four million Americans. The brains of

Alzheimer's patients have been found to be atrophied and deficient in certain neurotransmitters and also to contain excessive amounts of calcium. Traditionally, the goal of treatment has been to improve the patient's functioning by attacking the symptoms. Drugs primarily have been used to replace the most commonly missing neurotransmitter—acetylcholine—which researchers believe may affect memory and language.

A new approach to treating the disease involves nimodipine, the first drug under study that potentially could slow the progression of the disease. Nimodipine prevents excessive calcium—thought to contribute to brain cell death—from entering the cerebral blood vessels and being deposited in the brain cells.

"I believe the study is large enough and designed well enough to answer the questions we have about nimodipine's ability to slow the disease process. If the results are positive and significant, nimodipine could be an important breakthrough in the treatment of this devastating illness," said Sanford Auerbach, M.D., an assistant professor of neurology and a neurologist at UH, who is conducting the trial at BUMC.

The current double-blind study will involve 40 medical centers and nearly 1,500 patients considered mildly to moderately ill. Patients receive baseline tests for memory, language and behavior before taking nimodipine or a placebo and are retested after 26 weeks.

Women who quit smoking reduce risk of heart attack, study shows

Women smokers younger than 65 can virtually eliminate their increased risk of heart attack by quitting smoking, regardless of the amount they have smoked or the length of time they have smoked. A study of more than 3,000 women, published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, indicates that ex-smokers who had stopped smoking for three or more years had nearly the same risk of heart attack as women who had never smoked. The study, conducted by researchers from the School's Slone Epidemiology Unit, was the first in-depth study of the effect of smoking cessation on the risk of heart attack in women.

Lynn Rosenberg, Sc.D., a professor of public health and assistant director of the Slone Epidemiology Unit, and her colleagues found that the risk of heart attack in smokers was 3.6 times the risk for women who had never smoked, and that the risk increased with the amount smoked per day. For ex-smokers overall, the risk was 1.2 times greater than for non-smokers. The risk was highest in women who had stopped smoking less than two years previously, while the risk in women who had quit smoking for three or more years was nearly the same as the risk for women who had never smoked.

"These findings, along with our recent work demonstrating that women who smoke 'low-yield' cigarettes have virtually the same risk of heart attack as women who smoke higher-yield cigarettes, establish conclusively that smoking is extremely harmful to women in terms of cardiovascular risk and that quitting is beneficial," said Rosenberg.

She added that if women are aware of the dangers of smoking and the benefits of smoking cessation, they may be more motivated to quit smoking rather than switch brands.

National asbestos experts gather at symposium sponsored by SPH

Leading asbestos experts from across the nation participated in "Asbestos, the Persistent Plague: The Past, Present and Future of a Public Health Menace," a symposium sponsored by SPH and Tufts University. Participants—including scientists, environmentalists, victims' rights advocates and an investigative journalist—discussed charges that major educational, financial, judicial and medical institutions are perpetuating a cover-up that began as early as the 1930s, when asbestos manufacturers joined forces to suppress information about the hazards of asbestos exposure. They also discussed other issues including accusations that asbestos manufacturers promote the increased use of asbestos in developing countries.

The symposium, co-sponsored by the Boston University Art Gallery, coincided with the national debut of "Breath Taken: The Landscape and Biography of Asbestos," an exhibition at the Gallery, that chronicled the human tragedy of asbestos exposure. "Breath Taken," a mixed-media exhibition, included more than 100 photographs by Boston photographer Bill Ravanese, whose father died of asbestos-related disease, and a selection of vintage photographs.

"The symposium and the photographs and artifacts in the exhibition are about the human face of the asbestos 'problem,'" said conference organizer David Ozonof, M.D., M.P.H., the chief of the Environmental Health Section at SPH. "It reminds us that it is people and what happened to them, as well as what can still happen to others, that is at the essence of the problem, not economics, the convenience of the courts, or the philosophical leanings of various administrations and their regulatory agencies."

New textbook on biophysical chemistry by Bergethon and Simons is published

Biophysical Chemistry: Molecules to Membranes, written by Peter R. Bergethon, M.D., a research instructor of biochemistry and a clinical instructor of medicine, and Elizabeth R. Simons, Ph.D., a professor of biochemistry, recently was published. The approach of this textbook differs from that of other texts by applying the principles of thermodynamics of aqueous solutions, electrostatics and irreversible phenomena to topics of biochemistry and biophysics. The one-semester graduate textbook, published by Springer-Verlag New York, provides a foundation for research in cellular physiology biochemistry, membrane biology, as well as bioengineering, pharmacology, nephrology and many other fields.

Culpeper Foundation scholarships available to academic physicians

The Charles E. Culpeper Foundation has announced the continuation of a scholarship program to support the career development of academic physicians. Nominations will be accepted until August 15. Up to three awards of \$100,000 per year for up to three years will be made to United States medical schools.

To be eligible, applicants must be U.S. citizens and have



MATCH DAY RESULTS—Graduating students learned if they will do their internships and residencies at the hospital and specialty of their choice on Match Day, March 21. Of 145 BUSM students participating in the National Residency Matching Program, 67 received their first choice, 31 received their second choice and 12 received their third choice. Sixty students will enter programs in Massachusetts, including 35 matched with BUSM affiliates. Pictured celebrating Match Day results are, from left, Margaret Duggan, Stephen Tringale and Joan DiMarzio. (photo by David Keough, Educational Media Support Center)

received the M.D. degree from a U.S. medical school in 1982 or later. Those who have achieved rank higher than assistant professor will not be eligible. An application must be accompanied by assurances from the sponsoring institution that a faculty position and facilities adequate for the conduct of the proposed research program will be provided in either a basic science or clinical department. The applicants will be judged on the quality of their research proposals and their potential for successful careers in academic medicine. Awards will be announced by Jan. 15, 1991, for activation on or about July 1, 1991.

To obtain additional information about the scholarship program and an application form, contact the Foundation at 10 Stamford Forum, Stamford, CT 06901, (203) 975-1240.

Ninth Annual Sydney R. Cooperband Symposium to be held April 27

The Ninth Annual Sydney R. Cooperband Symposium on "Mechanisms of Cell Growth and Differentiation," sponsored by the Hubert H. Humphrey Cancer Research Center, will be held on Friday, April 27, from 8:45 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the Keefer Auditorium. Faculty members making presentations and their topics are: Stephen R. Farmer, Ph.D., an associate professor of biochemistry, "Adhesion-Dependent Expression of Extracellular Matrix Genes"; Paul F. Pilch, Ph.D., a professor of biochemistry, "Insulin-Regulated Glucose Transport"; Dana J. Kessler, Ph.D., a research associate, "Binding of an NF- κ B-like Factor to Regulatory Sequences of the c-myc Gene"; Richard M. Niles, Ph.D., a professor of biochemistry, "Induction of Tumor Cell Differentiation by Retinoic Acid."

Other presentations include: Thomas D. Gilmore, Ph.D., an assistant professor of biology, "Transcriptional Activation by Avian rel Oncoproteins"; Paul R. Dobner, Ph.D., an assistant professor of molecular genetics, "Regulation of Neuropeptide Gene Expression"; David A. Sassoon, Ph.D., an assistant professor of biochemistry, "Limb Development: Tissue Interactions Controlling Differentiation"; and Nadia Rosenthal, Ph.D., an assistant professor of biochemistry, "The Role of Myogenic Factors in Myosin Light Chain Gene Expression." In addition, Robert A. Weinberg, Ph.D., a professor of biology at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, will present "Oncogenes and Tumor Suppressor Genes."

Alumni Weekend to feature distinguished speakers, Risk Management program

BUSM faculty, clinicians and alumni will have the opportunity to hear two highly distinguished speakers and earn Risk Management credits at Alumni Weekend's Scientific Program, Saturday, May 12. The Scientific Program will feature Frank Spencer, M.D., president-elect of the American College of Surgeons and professor and chairman of the Department of Surgery at New York University Medical Center, New York, N.Y.; and George D. Malkasian, Jr. '54, president of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and former chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Mayo Medical School, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minn. Spencer will present "Professional Liability: Current Concepts and Courtroom Guidelines," and Malkasian's presentation is titled "Physician Risk Management: In the Office and Hospital."

Registration for the Scientific Program will take place in the lobby of the Instructional Building at 9 a.m. on May 12. The program begins at 9:30 a.m. in the Keefer Auditorium.

Newberne honored as fellow of Institute of Nutrition

Paul M. Newberne, Ph.D., a professor of pathology and laboratory medicine and a researcher at the Mallory Institute of Pathology, recently was honored as one of ten fellows with the American Institute of Nutrition. Newberne was recognized for his important contributions to the knowledge of nutritional and food factors in carcinogenesis, nutritionally induced congenital abnormalities, nutrition and foodborne diseases, nutrition and infection, nutrient-drug interactions, and nutritional toxicology and immunology. In the last decade, his contributions to the growing understanding of relationships between dietary and nutritional factors and cancer have brought worldwide recognition.

11th annual Medical Center Hoopathon for Huntington's Disease to be held

The 11th annual Hoopathon for Huntington's Disease, a free-throw basketball competition, will be held on Thursday, April 26, for 24 hours in the gym of the Solomon Carter Fuller Center. Prizes will be awarded in all categories of competition, both individual and team. All shooters will receive free "T" shirts.

Proceeds will initiate a pilot summer camp weekend program for young adults with HD, and will maintain ongoing research, patient services, education and outreach. For information on how to be a participant or sponsor, call (617) 638-8333 (x8333).

BUSM hosts ACS panel discussion

"Cancer Clusters," a panel discussion for students of medicine, nursing and all health professions, recently was held at the School of Medicine. Sponsored by the American Cancer Society, the interactive discussion explored suspected "outbreaks" of cancer in certain communities. The discussion was one in a series of four free evening panel discussions sponsored by the American Cancer Society.

The four-month series, entitled "The Faces of Cancer," is designed to complement students' classroom education with a deeper understanding of the patient's experience with cancer.

The discussion series was planned by a group of more than 30 students of the health professions. Maureen Kavanah, M.D., an assistant professor of surgery, is one of the group's advisors.

Upcoming CME course

"Musculoskeletal Imaging for Orthopedic Surgeons and General Radiologists—A Basic Course in Film Interpretation" will be held May 28 through June 1 at the Sonesta Beach Hotel & Spa in Hamilton, Bermuda. The primary goal of this course is to teach orthopedic surgeons and general radiologists how to interpret MRI examinations. CT scanning will also be discussed. In addition to didactic lectures, small group, hands-on workshops will be held where participants will be encouraged to review and interpret case material themselves. Course director is Peter D. Franklin, M.D., an assistant professor of radiology and chief of body CT and MRI at the University Hospital.

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